

A Surprising Catch

They had been fishing all night, but still their nets were empty. As the rays of a new day pierced the horizon, the fishermen pulled to shore and began unpacking their gear.

A teacher named Jesus was there among the shore, too, talking among all the workers. It was then Jesus turned to the fisherman named Simon and told him to cast his nets into the deep water.

Now Simon, who came from a long line of fishermen, knew where the best places to fish in Lake Gennesaret were. He didn't need advice from a stranger on how to do his job.

Simon also knew that the lake — 13 miles long and 8 miles wide — was a relatively shallow body of water. And because of its shallowness, any high wind that kicked up had the power of quickly turning placid water into raging waves. Anyone fishing Lake Gennesaret knew it was better to play it safe and stay close to the shore than venture into the deep water.

Perhaps Simon really needed a big catch, or perhaps there was something in Jesus' voice that intrigued him. Whatever it was, he mustered the courage to do what Jesus had instructed. Into the deep he went, and to his surprise and delight, he hauled a net overflowing with fish.

With waves tossing his little boat about, he squinted in the sun back towards the shore where Jesus stood and marveled. Had he not listened to Jesus and stayed safely close to shore, he would never have experienced that catch of all catches.

Let us look around our Lake Gennesarets right now.

Are we close to the shore, safe and comfortable in waters that we know, even if it means missing the chance of experiencing the great and surprising catches God has waiting for us?

Or are we ready to go into the risky and murky waters of life where the most life-changing God moments are swimming beneath our fears and doubts?

As we decide where it is we want to "fish" this day, let us remember that Jesus just didn't just tell Simon to "go to the deep water." Jesus said go AND prepare.

Go into the deep with God and prepare for something big.

Go into the deep with God and prepare for something good.

Go into the deep with God and prepare for blessings to abound.

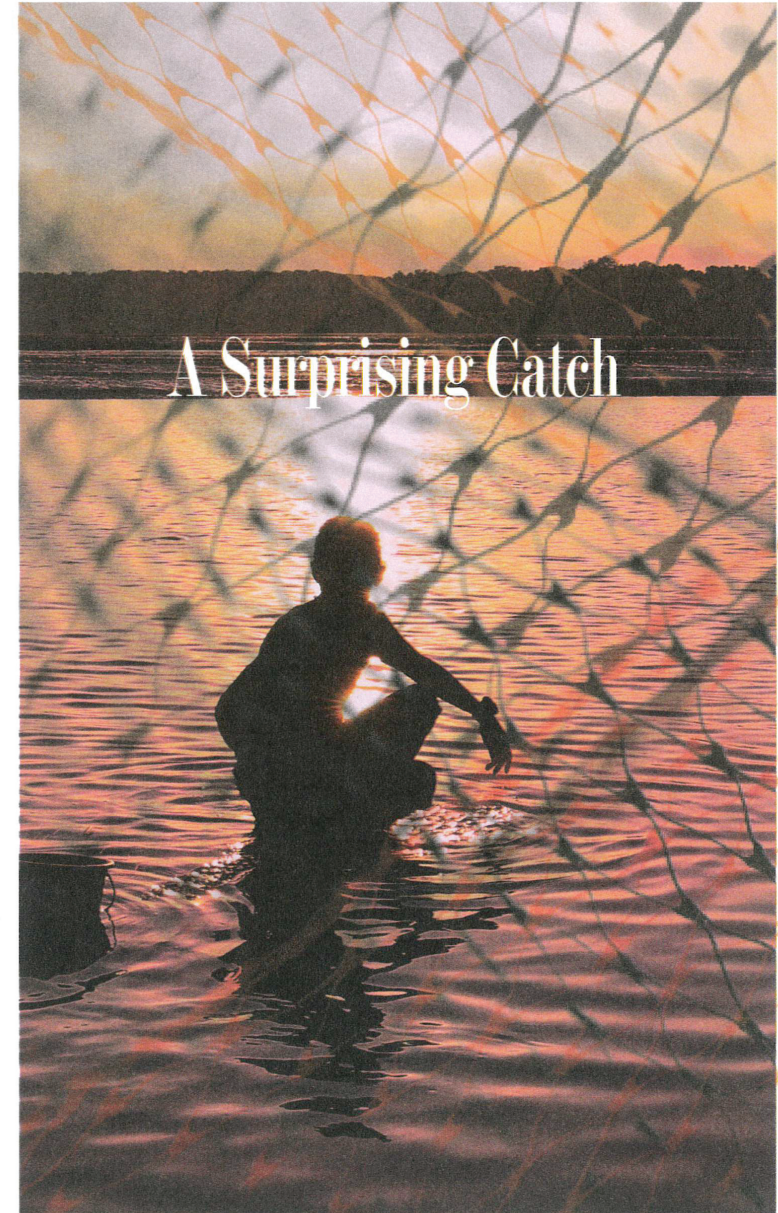
Go into the deep with God and prepare our lives to be changed.

Gracious God, we want to experience all that You have planned for us, but to do so, we need more courage to venture into the unknown, risky and often scary waters of life. Grant us that courage and increase our faith this day and always. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



8.5" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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St. John's United Church of Christ
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
 February 9, 2025



* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so. **Bold print** is everyone in unison

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER (be seated)

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

PRELUDE

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP (responsively) by Fred Pratt Green

Lord, when you singled out the Three, that day of days, by Galilee

They did not ask or know exactly what "to follow" meant,

To what new aims they gave assent, or where they had to go.

**In simple faith they followed you, because, instinctively, they knew
 whom they could love and trust;**

And risked the future for your sake, and trod the road you had to take,

As all disciples must.

***OPENING HYMN** *Called As Partners in Christ's Service* #453

***WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

**O Holy One, we give thanks that you have chosen us to be your people.
 You have called out to us so irresistibly that we have had to answer. Help us
 to remember each day that we have promised to serve you, and help us to
 put away all other things that compete for our loyalty to you. For you are
 our God, and we have chosen you. Join us in our worship. Amen.**

***RESPONSE** *I Am the Light of the World* (chorus)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (children please come forward) *Jesus Loves Me*

OFFERING INVITATION**

Let us give back to God with gratitude for all blessings received.

***RESPONSE** *Great is Your Faithfulness* (chorus) #86

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

**Generous God, Use the offerings of our resources and our lives to proclaim
 the gospel, spread your love and bring forth your kingdom. Amen.**

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Congregational Response: *Here I Am, Lord* (chorus)

ANTHEM *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* Medema

SCRIPTURE: Old Testament: Psalm 138

New Testament: Luke 5:1-11

L: The Word of God for the People of God **P: Thanks be to God**

MESSAGE *Touch or Tackle?*

***CLOSING HYMN** *You Walk Along Our Shoreline*

(tune: *The Day of Resurrection*)

***BLESSING** (responsively) by Ted Loder

Come, Lord Jesus, be with us in our longing; come, stay with us in our
 needing; come, go with us in our doing;

**Come, struggle with us in our searching; come, rejoice with us in our
 loving, through all the days of our lives.**

* **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Go In Peace* #445

* **POSTLUDE**

ST. JOHN'S UCC STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

Pastor	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Liturgist	Terry Goodman
Head Usher	Ren Simmons
Organist	DeEtta Welte
Music Director, Pianist	Becky Brockman
Children /Family Ministry Coordinator	Will Meyer
Nursery Attendant	Darcie Bahr
Projection	Saundra Lange
Sound	Lonny Vieck
Church Secretary	Angie Robinson
Church Board President	Ed Cummings
Greeters	Jim & Elaine Workman

To maintain a healthy relationship between the congregation and the pastor, St. John's has formed a Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC).

Ideas or issues for the PRC may be directed to any of the following members of the committee: Hope Clausman, Brenda Cummings, Eric Meyer, Sheri Stodghill, and Jana Vieck.



Help is needed to put up the cross for Lent and Easter on March 2 following church.



No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!



Virtual Worship Service is still available on the church website, myucc.org.
Worship Services are also "Live Streamed" on the Church's FACEBOOK page



THIS WEEK in the Life of St. John's

SUNDAY, February 9

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am
Fellowship 10 am
Worship 10:30 am
Children's Church

MONDAY, February 10

BABE Store 12-5:30 pm
Friends Valentines Dance 5-6:15 pm VU Activities Center
Outreach & Missions 6:30 pm

TUESDAY, February 11

Bible Study 10:30 am & 6:30 pm

WEDNESDAY, February 12

Choir 4:30 pm
Christian Ed 6:30 pm

THURSDAY, February 13

Technology 10 am
Dinner at McAlister's 6 pm

FRIDAY, February 14

Happy Valentines Day

LOOKING AHEAD

SUNDAY, February 16

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am
Worship 10:30 am
Children's Church

MONDAY, February 17

Friends 5-6:15 pm VU Bowling Center
Presidents Day
Office Closed
BABE Store 12-5:30 pm
Worship 6 pm
Church Board 7 pm

WEDNESDAY, February 19

Choir 4:30 pm

THURSDAY, February 20

Girl Scouts 4:30 pm
Dinner at Old Chicago 6 pm
LAM Banquet 6:30 pm Doors Open at 6 pm



ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

Continuing Prayer Requests: Laura Sanders, Bruce Deckard, Gary Meyer, Don Osborne, Jr., Norma Meyer.

- Please pray for Andy Jennings. He is dealing with some concerning health issues.
- Vern's pain is slowly subsiding. Prayers remain appreciated!
- Please keep Pat Hutchison in your prayers, along with his wife, Theresa. He has been diagnosed with T-cell lymphoma, and he will have 6 cycles of chemo every 3 weeks, starting Friday, February 7th, he is currently at the Simon Cancer Center in Indy.

Addresses for Shut-ins and Others

Norma Meyer, Gentle Care, - Room 8, 1202 S 16th, Vincennes, IN 47591

Susie Milligan, Colonial Assisted Living, - Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Leona Conway, Aperion Care, - C Wing Room 3, 3801 Old Bruceville Rd , Vincennes, IN 47591

Marge Beamon, The Villages at Oak Ridge, - Room 303, 1694 Troy Rd. Washington, IN 47501

Home

Bruce Deckard

Gary Meyer

Michael Lankford

Gayle Huffer

Ellen Riggs

If you have a caregiving need such as a hospital stay, a visit or desire communion, please contact the church office, Janet Goodman (co-chair of Caregivers) or any caregiver listed below. We would appreciate your help and want to make sure everyone is blessed by St. John's when you need it! St. John's UCC Caregivers- Ed and Brenda Cummings, Cindy Deckard (co-chair), Connie and Dan Coulter, Peggy Meyer, Ray Pieper, Terry and Janet Goodman, Lonny Vieck, Larry and Betsy Marchino.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY on *The Gnostic Gospels* will have its last sessions at 10:30 & 6:30 on Tuesdays, February 11th. We will be focusing on the *Gospel of Thomas*.

SOUPER-BOWL SUNDAY: Thanks to everyone who brought in cans of soup today for our Blessings Box

LENT BEGINS with Ash Wednesday on March 5th with a Service of Communion and the Imposition of Ashes at 7 p.m.



CONGRATULATIONS to Noah Atkins-Harris and Aaron Plenske who were married yesterday in a private ceremony in Staunton, IL. Noah is the youngest daughter of Pastor Debbie Jo and her late husband, John Harris.



LAM Banquet: St John's UCC is again sponsoring a table at the LAM (Life After Meth) banquet which will be held on February 20th at Highland Woods Community Center. This is an opportunity to learn about an important local ministry that we support and includes a meal. We encourage members who have never attended to consider attending. **Doors open at 6:00 PM, dinner at 6:30.** Please place your name on the sign-up sheet in the back hallway no later than Sunday February 16th if interested in attending. Any seats not used by church members will be donated for LAM program participants. Contact Larry Marchino or the church office with any questions.